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Pope Pius XI's Message to the Eucharistic Congress

Message of Pope Pius XI broadcast by radio from Vatican City to the Eighth National Eucharistic Congress in New Orleans, October 18, 1938. N. C. W. C. News Service.

WHILE Christ, the Lord, Who alone is "The Way, the Truth and the Life," holds magnificent triumph among you in New Orleans, which has become as an altar for the entire Nation, We warmly felicitate Our children on this festal occasion and, rejoicing exceedingly in their fervent zeal and piety, paternally and gladly unite with you in word, hope and prayer.

Indeed, many things cause Us fear and anxiety. Particularly, We see many men who hold as valueless and reject and spurn those divine precepts of the Gospel, which alone can bring salvation to humanity. We can scarcely refrain from tears when We behold Eternal Majesty set aside, outraged, or with unspeakable wickedness held up as an enemy to reviling execration.

May We not discern, however, a promise of better things for the Universal Church in the reflowering among you and among all peoples of Eucharistic love and the daily increase of ardent devotion for the August Sacrament.

For, if the Blessed Sacrament, in the words of Our wise predecessor, is to be thought of as a "center whereon Christian life in all its amplitude takes its stand," so that It may be called "The Soul of the Church," It must be that wherever It is solemnly adored and received with pious frequency It will heal the ills and infirmities of men and will quicken and strengthen them in Christian virtues.

"Where Christ is there is Heaven." It is therefore devoutly to be hoped that the Kingdom of Heaven is being renewed and reinvigorated wherever there is deep devotion to the Holy Eucharist and where It becomes the nourishment of souls.

While We exhort you from Our paternal heart to most holy zeal towards the Blessed Sacrament, We fervently pray with you that, strong in youth, your people, who stand forth in wealth and power, may be also a shining example of Catholic Faith and Christian virtue.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt's Message to the Eucharistic Congress

Letter sent to Archbishop Rummel on the occasion of the opening of the Eighth National Eucharistic Congress, October 18, 1938, and read by Postmaster General James A. Farley at a civic reception tendered to the Papal Legate.

THE WHITE HOUSE,
WASHINGTON,
October 1, 1938.

MY DEAR ARCHBISHOP RUMMEL:

I send hearty greetings to you and through you to all who gather within the hospitable borders of the Archdiocese of New Orleans on the occasion of the

Eighth National Eucharistic Congress. I trust that the deliberations will quicken the spiritual life of all who participate and inspire them with new zeal for the work of the Master Whom we all serve.

We have just celebrated the one-hundred-fiftieth anniversary of the adoption of our Federal Constitution, which guarantees freedom of conscience as the corner stone of all our liberties. We in this country are upholders of the ideal of democracy in the government of man. We believe with heart and soul that in the long struggle of the human race to attain an orderly society the democratic form of government is the highest achievement. All of our hopes have their basis in the democratic ideal.

Even before the adoption of our Declaration of Independence George Mason, in the Virginia Declaration of Rights, voiced what has become one of the deepest convictions of the American people: "That religion, or the duty which we owe to our Creator, and the manner of discharging it, can be directed only by reason and conviction, not by force or violence, and therefore all men are equally entitled to the free exercise of religion, according to the dictates of conscience; and that it is the mutual duty of all to practice Christian forbearance, love, and charity towards each other."

NO GREATER BLESSING

We still remain true to the faith of our fathers who established religious liberty when the nation began. We must remember, too, that our forebears in every generation, and wherever they established their homes, made prompt and generous provision for the institutions of religion. We must continue their steadfast reliance upon the providence of God.

I have said and I repeat to this solemn Eucharistic Congress that no greater blessing could come to our land today than a revival of the spirit of religion. I doubt if there is any problem in the world today—so-

cial, political or economic—that would not find happy solution if approached in the spirit of the Sermon on the Mount.

May your prayers hasten the day when both men and nations will bring their lives into conformity with the teaching of Him, Who is the Way, the Light and the Truth.

Apostles of the Eucharist

MOST REV. AMLETO GIOVANNI CICOGNANI

Address delivered before a Sectional Meeting of Religious at the Eighth National Eucharistic Congress on October 18, 1938. N. C. W. C. News Service.

WHAT is the reason for a Eucharistic Congress? Why should there be so much solemnity about us? What is it that has brought so many people together from every part of the country: lay people, Religious, priests, and Bishops? Even the Holy Father has come in the person of his Cardinal Legate.

The reason is, because "God is present." And when a city or a nation is honored with a visit from so great a guest, every preparation and every solemnity is but poor and inadequate. It is true that Jesus Christ is present in every church, whether great or lowly. He dwells continually amongst us in simplicity and silence, yearning not for external splendor but for the love of men, and desiring to be united with us in the life of grace. But it is precisely with this end in view that external ceremonies are carried out: to promote in our souls a stronger union with Jesus Christ by renewing within us the fervor of piety. And be-

sides there is another motive: for, while atheism would banish Christ from human society, it is our purpose here to reaffirm publicly and socially our faith in Him, present in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar.

Priests of the Church prepare the Eucharist. In a manner of speaking they produce it or bring it into being for the life of souls. But, if there be urgent need in general for the cooperation of the Faithful with the sacred ministry of the priest, here above all is there an apostolate to be worked out, because the apostolate of the Eucharist is the apostolate of life.

It is a question of life. Should we not therefore all be interested in it? For our temporal and physical life bread is the means of sustenance, and the world struggles to procure it; for the moral and spiritual part of us God Himself is our support. He created the soul immortal; and yet Jesus has solemnly proclaimed: "Amen, Amen I say unto you: except you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, you shall not have life in you. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath everlasting life: and I will raise him up in the last day."

THE EUCHARIST, OF PRECEPT FOR ADULTS, IS A MORALLY NECESSARY MEANS OF SALVATION

The words of Jesus: "Do this for a commemoration of Me," while referring directly to the renewal of the Holy Sacrifice, must be applied also to the reception of Holy Communion,—which is a matter of obligation for adults and in fact a matter of divine precept. The Church has determined this precept as regards the time at which it must be fulfilled, and as regards its opportuneness, and its usefulness for us. She has found it wise to condemn every tendency toward rigorism and laxism, and to recommend and insist on the norm followed by the early Christians, reported to us in the inspired words of the Acts of the Apostles.

THE EUCHARIST IS A SOURCE OF APOSTOLATE

It is only briefly that Jesus remains bodily with us after Holy Communion, but in this short time He can pour into our souls an abundance of peace and light. Each one of us is then the fortunate disciple "leaning on the breast of Jesus" to whom heavenly secrets are revealed. Yes, the Lord in the union of the Eucharist opens His heart to the loving soul, He heals it if there is need, He divests it of all that may be evil, and He lifts it up, even to the point of reclothing it with Himself. The presence of Christ illuminates the soul; and divine light, infinitely superior to that of the sun, cannot fail to be diffused. It produces a new and more abundant life. "I am come that they may have life, and may have it more abundantly." The love of Christ is stimulated within us, and will not fail to awaken powerful energies for the spreading of this light and love in a powerful apostolate. Let us glance briefly at the Eucharist, its nature, its effects and the ends it attains, and we shall see that it is an abundant life for ourselves and others.

THE WONDERFUL EFFECTS OF HOLY COMMUNION

The Eucharist is both a Sacrament and a Sacrifice. As a Sacrament, that is as a visible sign of invisible grace, it is "the true body and the true blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, really and substantially present under the appearances of bread and of wine for the nourishment of our souls." Jesus is present then, in the Blessed Sacrament to give us sustenance and life, and in fact the effects of Holy Communion are wonderful.

I. The Holy Eucharist brings about a more intimate union with our Lord, and by consequence with our neighbor also. We receive in this Sacrament much more than the grace which comes to us in the other

Sacraments. We enter into a relationship with our Lord which approaches nearer the union of the Beatific Vision. And by reason of the fact that many participate in the Holy Eucharist, we become all of us one in Christ. "The bread, which we break, is it not the partaking of the Body of the Lord? For we, being many, are one bread, one body, all that partake of one bread." How lovingly God lowers Himself toward man to make him His friend: "I have called you friends," even to deify him, "You are gods."

II. There is in Holy Communion an increase of sanctifying grace. This is clear from the fact that the Eucharist is called a sacrament of the living. It presupposes a conscience, either pure with the purity of Baptismal innocence, or purified by the Sacrament of Penance; and to the grace already possessed adds a "*justificatio secunda*," which fosters charity, nourishing it with the sweetness and freshness of heavenly bread. "*Mens impletur gratia*"—"The soul is filled with grace," as Saint Thomas Aquinas expresses this truth; and we have in life so much need of grace, to know God and to love Him, to be obedient to His Law, to be honest and loyal citizens, and to persevere in good.

III. The Holy Eucharist offers a remedy against sin and against the wounds which sin produces in the soul. It takes away or diminishes venial sins, and preserves us from mortal sins. It is a medicine, an "antidote"; and has for the soul that effect which a healthful food produces in the body, freeing it from lesser afflictions, and preserving it from the more serious disorders.

IV. The Eucharist gives us the promise and guarantee of future glory. "He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath everlasting life and I will raise him up in the last day." Christ is life; and life cannot remain with death. Life cannot but vivify. "*Et futurae gloriae nobis pignus datur*"—"a pledge of fu-

ture glory is given to us," "an instrument of immortality."

THE HOLY SACRIFICE

The Eucharist as a sacrifice is the Mass. "The Mass is the Sacrifice of the New Law, in which Christ, through the ministry of the priest, offers Himself to God in an unbloody manner under the appearances of bread and wine." We behold the sacrifice in an action, in the carrying out of those successive liturgical functions, which make up the Mass: acts of Christ, of the priest, and of the Faithful who assist at the holy rite; acts of adoration, of thanksgiving, of impetration, and of expiation; acts which are intended to glorify God in the highest manner, because it is Christ here Who is the principal priest and the sacrificial victim. It is He Who through the ministry of the celebrant offers to His heavenly Father His Body and Blood already immolated on Calvary's Cross.

There is not on earth an action so noble or so grand as the Mass, nor one which so honors God. The value of this complex function—complex, because performed by Christ, by the priest, and by the Faithful—the value of this action is infinite as on the Cross, because the victim is the God-man, and His acts have an infinite worth. The victim is at the same time the victor. He brings back an eternal victory and wins for those who are united with Him in this action redemption and more abundant life. There are not in the Mass new merits on the part of Christ, but there is a new application of the treasury of merits acquired by Him in His earthly life; and through Him the Mass has an intrinsic efficacy, independent of us men, or as the theologians say: "*ex opere operato*." Certainly the good dispositions help much of those for whom the sacrifice is offered and of the priest who celebrates it, and the better they are, so much the greater will be the efficacy "*ex opere operantis*."

FULNESS OF SPIRITUAL LIFE

The honor which is paid to God in this Divine Sacrifice constitutes of itself a more abundant life, because in it we share in the action of Christ:

I. God is honored in the Mass, our Creator and Lord. Angels adore Him, men adore Him; and we all participate in the adoration offered by our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. How worthy is adoration with Christ, and offered up through Him! This is the laudative end of the Mass, or adoration.

II. In the Mass God is thanked for His incessant benefits to us and to the world. No one of us is able alone to thank God adequately; but we do pay this debt in full when Christ unites Himself with us in expressing gratitude to the eternal Father. It is the Eucharistic end of the Mass, or thanksgiving.

III. God is implored in the Mass: to bless us, assist us, and save us. No prayer can remain unanswered where it is Christ "living to make intercession for us." It is the impetratory end of the Mass, or petition.

IV. Again, the Justice of God is satisfied in the Mass, the Justice offended by our sins and by those of our brethren both living and dead. The need is great to satisfy for the crimes and sins committed every day and every hour all over the face of the earth, the more so because even "a just man shall fall seven times." It is the propitiatory end of the Holy Sacrifice, or expiation.

THE EUCHARISTIC APOSTOLATE FOR CHRISTIAN CIVILIZATION

We call ours a Christian civilization. For almost two thousand years Christ has given to the times, to the nations, and to men His great name, spread abroad by the preaching and by the varied activities of the Apostles. Now, Christian means follower of Christ, and the substance of Christianity is the life of Christ

within us, in our thoughts and in our private and public actions. If such a life is lacking, there remains nothing of Christianity but the name; and this is left to us not as a glory but as a reproach.

Our altars are the center of this life: the center for the priests who there offer the Eucharistic Sacrifice, and there make known the word of God, the center for the Faithful who gathering in the churches before the altar strengthen their souls at the tabernacle. We must not think of the Tabernacle simply as a shrine to be visited, nor must we regard the Eucharist merely as a sacred symbol to be honored. It is a food to be received, it is the food of life, of the Christian life,—which therefore ought to be a Eucharistic life, and a Eucharistic life cannot but be an apostolate. For this reason the Church has decreed in her Canon Law: "Let the Faithful be urged to refresh themselves frequently, even daily, with the Eucharistic Bread, according to the norms handed down in Decrees of the Holy See; and let those who attend Mass not only communicate spiritually by desire but when rightly disposed also by the sacramental reception of the Most Holy Eucharist."

You, Brothers and Sisters, form a beautiful and harmonious variety in the Church, in the "One mystical Body of Christ"; and your Rules and Constitutions are nothing other than so many roads to perfection, so many ways to reach individual sanctity of life and to accomplish the work of the Church for her children. The bond of perfection is charity; and in charity, in the love of Christ, you press close each morning to His holy altar. Keep always firmly fixed in your minds that no matter what good you may be striving to accomplish, no matter what may be the specific scope of your particular Institute, its substance is in the Eucharist. Here is the point of departure and of arrival, for you, for your students, and for all whom you would benefit.

In the various sessions of this Eucharistic Congress many good works will be highly recommended in the hope that the apostolate of the clergy may be rendered more fruitful and the Christian life of the Faithful may become more intense. When there is question of good works approved by proper ecclesiastical authority, there remains nothing for us to do but to welcome such efforts and to cooperate wholeheartedly with them. It is a matter of greatest joy to see how not a few of these works are a precious characteristic of the Catholic life of the United States of America. The first Friday of the month is always an attractive and highly edifying spectacle even in the most remote and humble churches. The groups of Holy Name men are the boast of the dioceses and parishes, Spiritual Retreats are becoming ever more widespread, to the advantage not only of the individuals who participate in them but of society as well. The Catholic Press is increasing its contributions for the spiritual life of our people, for the benefit of the missions, for the breaking down of prejudices, and for the spread of charity, order and social justice. The Supreme Pontiffs have blessed these and other works; and this blessing is an indication, a pledge and a guarantee of their excellence.

A DEFECT TO BE AVOIDED

It is clear that "*Non omnia possumus omnes.*" But no jealousy nor exclusivism should enter into our program. Where a work is already going ahead in satisfactory fashion, there is no reason to oppose it or to substitute another for it. Is it perhaps possible to promote the common love of God with the sowing of divisions amongst ourselves? The apostle is not an exclusivist, nor an absolutist. The apostle is urged on by the charity of Christ. Charity "seeketh not her own," but the things of God. We find advice on this subject in the first Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians, which we may well adopt as a program of ac-

tion. St. Paul wrote: "There are contentions among you. . . . Every one of you saith: I indeed am of Paul, and I am of Apollo, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ." He then observes: "Is Christ divided? . . . The foolish things of the world God hath chosen that He may confound the wise. . . . He that glorieth may glory in the Lord." The true apostle seeks to exercise his ministry wherever there is a sign of life; and he exercises it with prayer and example, with sacrifice, word, and action. And he wastes none of his energy in narrowness of vision.

AN ARDENT APOSTOLATE

Our Holy Father spoke one day these words: "Good and evil are in conflict with one another in a gigantic duel: no one has the right to be half-hearted in the present hour." Our human resources are not sufficient of themselves; but united with Christ in the holocaust of the altar, united with Him in Holy Communion, we become as it were participants in His omnipotence, and we speed His triumph.

There has broken loose in our times a pernicious movement, denying God, contradicting the rights of man and of human personality, productive of hate, and destructive to civilization. Whole nations are the victims of this ideology. For the followers of Christ it is not a time of fear, but of action,—of Catholic Action, of divine action by means of the Holy Eucharist. It is for this that the Holy Father has summoned us to Catholic Action; it is for this that our Lord willed to remain with us "even to the consummation of the world." To the sacrilegious actions of those who deny and persecute God we oppose every day and in every part of the world an intense cooperation with the sacerdotal ministry of thousands of priests calling Jesus Christ down upon our altars and lifting up the Sacred Host to be adored. To the impiety of those who would banish from the world the God present with us, we

oppose the frequent, even daily, Communions of millions of souls desiring to live with Christ, in Him, and for Him. And the work of Redemption will go on ever more rapidly, its progress urged by the paternal mercy of God. Apostles of the Eucharist, we shall be the apostles of life.

World Peace if Rulers Met in Eucharistic Congress

MOST REV. EDWARD MOONEY, D.D.

Sermon delivered at the Solemn Pontifical Mass with which the Eighth National Eucharistic Congress was formally opened on October 18, 1938.

IN what is the most blessed and consoling mystery of the Faith, the Holy Eucharist gives us the world-wide presence of the Whole Christ—in all the alluring traits of His glorified humanity, and in all the alluring traits of His glorious divinity. Through the Holy Eucharist, then, Christ is, not indeed in an exclusive sense, but surely in a significant and practical sense, “the way, and the truth, and the life.”

Moreover, employers and employes who kneel together at the Communion rail will surely feel the inconsistency of their standing apart in their workaday lives.

CHRISTIANITY'S PURPOSE

To think of Christ as the Way, the Truth and the Life, is to touch the supreme purpose of Christianity. One phrase, “God is man,” sums up the whole effort of those who would banish religion from human life. To offset this effort, we point out to our people in detail

the dangers of a program of godlessness which with deadly effect is being carried forward on so many fronts in the world today. We warn them of its application to childhood in irreligious education; to youth in studied demoralization for profit or in fatal disregard of accepted moral standards as antiquated conventions; to the family in the revival of abominations which have destroyed nations and threatens to destroy ours; to society in the cult of selfishness, in the denial of responsibility, in the glorification of mere power.

But a Eucharistic Congress stirs thoughts that go straight to the heart of the Christian answer to life's problems. It brings before us the vision of Christ Himself in His Sacramental Presence and power as the Way, and the Truth and the Life. To be practically aware of that presence and responsive to that power is the one unfailing means to assure the working out of God's purpose in our lives.

The fathers and mothers who keep close to Christ in Holy Communion will give God His place in their family life and in the education of their children. The boys and the girls, the young men and women who hold fast to the companionship of Christ in Holy Communion will find there the strength to measure up to Christ's moral standards of personal conduct.

MODERN SHALLOW CRITICISM

This is not the place to point out at length the dire need in the world today of this principle of faith which the doctrine of the Holy Eucharist illustrates and exalts. Nor is it the place even to remark how sad it is to see good men picking and choosing from what proud and shallow destructive criticism has left of historic Christianity, the materials for their own crazy-quilt of belief to replace Christ's own seamless garment of truth, or trying to vindicate their right to the hallowed name of Christian after they have rejected, in the name of liberalism and in the denial of the supernat-

ural, the bulk of what the witness of history plainly shows that Christ taught.

But it is interesting to remark that Christian groups, separated in the great defection from the only Church that holds Eucharistic Congresses, lose their hold on the fundamental Christian truth of the Incarnation and all that it involves in doctrinal and moral teaching, in almost exact proportion as they move away from Catholic Eucharistic faith and practice. And it is consoling to see that the one outstanding group that with uncertain step and many a setback follows the path that leads back to the home of Catholic truth, is guided by the light of the sanctuary lamp which symbolizes our faith in the Real Presence of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament.

GRACE IN ABUNDANCE

All the means of grace which the Church dispenses in continuing the mission of Christ on earth are but so many forces capable of producing or developing this union between God and the faithful soul. The whole sacramental system instituted by Christ and committed to His Church represents God's solicitude and divine generosity in giving us the opportunity to enter into, to sustain, and to increase this union. In the supernatural order as in the order of nature, God's provision for life is superabundant. He might have been content with one Sacrament, just as He might have made the oak tree bear one acorn—but He instituted many; He gave them in such profusion that they reach out to man at every turn and in every condition of life. But the prime purpose and object of them all is fundamentally the same—to produce or increase that union with God which we call the life of grace.

Of such vital moment is this union of God with the soul, of which the Sacraments are the prime instruments and means, that when He came to institute the Sacrament which He intended to be of most fre-

quent use as the universal and ordinary means of sustaining and increasing the life of grace, Christ used His divine power to make it the Sacrament of Himself, of His own sacred Body. Food and drink are indispensable for the life of the body; they are its ordinary daily support. Christ, under appearance of the most common of human foods, comes to us in Holy Communion to be the support of our spiritual life which consists in the indwelling of God through grace, and to be the pledge of eternal life which consists in the possession of God forever. "I am the living bread which comes down from heaven; if any man eat of this bread he shall live forever." "I am the life." "He that eateth me, the same liveth by me."

Christ in the Holy Eucharist

MOST REV. JOHN J. MITTY, D.D.

NO one who witnesses this vast concourse of peoples from the uttermost parts of our country, no one who beholds this crown of priests and bishops of the Church encircling the august presence of His Eminence the Cardinal Legate of our Holy Father, Pope Pius XI, no one who has experienced the spirit of faith and charity that radiates from the Blessed Sacrament throughout this city, can help but realize that through the intercession of the great Saint Louis, last of the Crusaders, and Patron of this archdiocese, a great grace has come to our American people and a new spirit has moved them to battle for the things of God.

In the darkness of the night that is upon us, one voice alone has raised itself above all these clamorings of race, of interest and of ambition. It is the voice of him toward whom all Christendom has ever turned in

the hour of its greatest peril, the mediator between governments and peoples, the supreme arbiter of peace and of war, the highest representative of right and duty, the infallible organ of truth, the father of all nations and all peoples, Christ's Vicar on earth. In a voice as militant as that of the great Urban who hurled the Knights from Claremont to do battle for the earthly Jerusalem, Pope Pius XI has summoned the militant Church of Christ to a new Crusade of Catholic Action in behalf of the City of God.

With a keenness of social insight, equaled possibly only by Saint Paul, he has called the Catholic Church to a deeper realization of the doctrine of Christ's Mystical Body; he has given to the unorganized ranks of its lay members a definite form and specific objectives; he has infused in them the spirit of a new Crusade to restore all things in Christ; and he has sent them forth with the ancient cry on their lips *God Wills It for He Wills the Reign of His Christ*. Before his unflagging zeal and heroic valor, Christendom has awakened. Already a new spirit breathes upon the Church and His Mystical Body is entering near Jerusalem, as Christ did in the long ago.

Christ Still Rules World

MOST REV. JOSEPH SCHREMS, D.D.

Extracts from address delivered over Church of the Air program, October 30, 1938. N. C. W. C. News Service.

WE are living in a century of progress—railroads dot the land; machines fill our factories; telephone and telegraph have spread a web over all the nations of the earth. In the face of all these achievements of our day, what is the meaning of the small

White Host with the little light burning before it in our churches?

Is the world too busy to bother with this seemingly insignificant Host? Ah, no, Holy Mother Church thinks differently. She tells us that this is indeed the "Bread that has come down from heaven"—the very body and blood, soul and divinity of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Yes, Christ still is the center and the ruler of the world and millions turn their eyes with living faith upon this Sacrament which is the magnet which draws them to Him.

Thus then does the faith in the Blessed Sacrament bring us into the very heart of Christian revelation. It raises our souls to heavenly heights which else were inaccessible. Behold the contrast of our days! On the one hand, men who believe nothing—their gaze is empty as they look to nothing more than the dark grave. On the other hand, we who believe in the Blessed Sacrament find in it a treasure of Christian truth, which is the life and the light of the soul for time and eternity.

Happy are we who have inherited this precious faith which lovingly we pass on to those that will come after us. We need not look for Christ in the distance of time. No, we see Him now, right in our midst. This faith of ours explains the Eucharistic Congress.

Postmaster General Farley's Message to the Eucharistic Congress

I COME to you today as the representative of the President of the United States and I bring you his greetings and felicitations on the occasion of the Eighth National Eucharistic Congress.

If there is one thing to be learned, it seems to me, from the vast concourse of men and women who have assembled here from every corner of the country and from every walk of life, it is the lesson that there are still God-living men and women in our midst, despite the ravages of materialism, atheism, crime, selfishness and all the other evils that are prevalent in our civilization today.

The history of our Church is a singular proof that there is no force in the world today, nor has there been in past ages, that can destroy foundations established on the firm bedrock of eternal truth. As a matter of fact, there can be no real prosperity, political or otherwise, without religion and morality. The Father of his country was wise enough to foresee that those rulers who seek to drive God out of the lives and hearts of their subjects are raising up to themselves dangerous Frankensteins that will bring on their own destruction and the destruction of their people.

I am glad to be here to join with you in asking God to preserve our country and our people, and as a representative of our Government to bring you the greetings and good wishes of the President of the United States.

Catholicism in Louisiana

GOVERNOR LECHE

THE Acadians gave to the Catholic Church in Louisiana generations of faithful sons and daughters who have always preserved the Faith. They gave sons and daughters in the service of the Church to perpetuate that great institution within the confines of our own Louisiana, and some of them, I am proud to say, are here in this distinguished audience.

Louisiana has been singularly free of intolerance, and all of us live in amity and cordial relationship, as it should be under our democratic government. This great religious gathering here is proof of this spirit of friendliness; it is proof of one of the finest principles of our American Constitution—religious freedom. It is this principle that has enabled your Church to thrive, that enabled our Acadian people to continue their loyal devotion to their Faith and all others to follow their convictions. It makes possible such a Congress as this.

Two hundred and twenty years ago when our city was founded one of the first things that Bienville did in tracing the plan of our city was to choose a spot for a church. On that same spot for more than two centuries there has stood a church, the mother church of the Mississippi Valley. For more than a century New Orleans was the center of Catholic Church jurisdiction for the great valley. New Orleans is proud to boast of having the first convent in the United States and the first Catholic girls' school—the Ursuline Convent. New Orleans is proud that it had the first Catholic boys' school in the Mississippi Valley.

We are proud that New Orleans is the See City for the second oldest diocese of the United States. We are proud to say in welcoming this brilliant gathering of distinguished Catholics for a Eucharistic Congress that for two hundred years New Orleans has had the blessing of the Holy Eucharist in its midst without interruption, a record that few, if any, cities in America can equal.